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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: WEEK OF OCTOBER 26-30; 11/03/09; BUENOS AIRES

11. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Leading international stories last week were mostly related to: the Honduran deal whereby ousted President Manuel Zelaya could be restored to power; the UN General Assembly condemnation of the US embargo on Cuba, which was hailed by Argentine authorities, and Venezuelan Hugo Chavez' armed civilian militias.

12. HONDURAS

Regarding the Honduran deal on Zelaya's return, most dailies positively view the USG intervention crisis as the only way out of the crisis. Ana Baron, from leading "Clarín," writes (10/31), "... What definitely favored a deal between coup monger Roberto Micheletti and ousted president Zelaya was that the US finally intervened in a unilateral way. No delegation of presidents and Foreign Ministers of the region got the two leaders to reach a deal, not even a feeble one. Not even Brazil, in spite of its clout, was able to convince them of the need to sign the San Jose agreements obtained through the mediation of Costa Rica President Oscar Arias." On the same subject, Csar Gonzlez-Calero, writes an opinion piece for "La Nación" (10/31) highlighting that, "if Zelaya is finally reinstated into power Washington will have scored a goal, but it will be a diplomatic triumph loaded with questions and suspicion. One should wonder why Obama has taken four months in sending three top 'firemen' to extinguish a fire that threatened to go beyond the Honduran borders and seriously damage its image in Latin America. The White House ambiguity can only be explained by the threat implied by Hugo Chavez' interference in the Central American country, where the Pentagon has one of its strategic military bases in the region (Palmerola)." Business-financial "Ámbito Financiero" (11/02) carries an opinion piece by contributor Andrés Cisneros, who underscores that, "The Honduran case appears as a temporary tie in which the institutional scheme is maintained as well as the system of traditional political parties. However, the populist challenge will remain in Zelaya's figure, who will likely break with his party to establish a third option that will alter ancestral bipartisan system."

13. CUBA

On the UN condemnation of the embargo against Cuba, left-of-center "Página 12" (10/28) headlines an opinion piece on the subject, "A sick obsession," in which it accuses the US of not wanting to lift the embargo. Atilio A. Borón, the author, points out that, in spite of the announced promises to start a "new policy" on Cuba and Latin America, the US has only made the embargo a bit lighter, but the bottom line is that it does not want to lift it. Catriel Etcheverri, international analyst of business-financial "Buenos Aires Económico," (10/29) opines that, "it remains to be seen whether Obama will implement a genuine multilateralism or just a convenient multilateralism that suits him well." Marcelo Cantelmi, international editor of leading "Clarín," writes (10/31), "The US President needs some gestures from Havana in order to lift the

blockade, but, most important of all, he needs to win the arm-wrestling with the conservative opposition in Washington."

14. CHAVEZ

On Chavez' armed civilian militias, leading "Clarín" carries an editorial saying that Venezuelan Chavez' decision to organize armed civilian militias, which is based on his need to reinforce the authoritarian features of his regime, "is a negative sign for neighboring countries and Latin American democracies."

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MARTINEZ